

# Journal of Extension

---

Volume 58 | Number 4

Article 22

---

August 2020

## County Commissioner Perceptions of Cooperative Extension: Implications for Strengthening the Partnership with County Government

Mark Blevins

*North Carolina State University*

K. S.U. Jayaratne

*North Carolina State University*

Jackie Bruce

*North Carolina State University*

Lucy Bradley

*North Carolina State University*

Mitzi Stumpf-Downing

*North Carolina State University*



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

---

### Recommended Citation

Blevins, M., Jayaratne, K. S., Bruce, J., Bradley, L., & Stumpf-Downing, M. (2021). County Commissioner Perceptions of Cooperative Extension: Implications for Strengthening the Partnership with County Government. *Journal of Extension*, 58(4). Retrieved from <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/joe/vol58/iss4/22>

This Feature Article is brought to you for free and open access by TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Journal of Extension* by an authorized editor of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact [kokeefe@clemson.edu](mailto:kokeefe@clemson.edu).

## **County Commissioner Perceptions of Cooperative Extension: Implications for Strengthening the Partnership with County Government**

### **Abstract**

We undertook a study to determine county commissioner perceptions of Cooperative Extension. The majority of county commissioners had had prior involvement with Extension. Nearly 59% represented rural counties, and 94% indicated that agriculture is important to their county economies. Overall, the commissioners had a positive perception of Cooperative Extension, and their overall perception positively correlated with the significance of agriculture to the local economy. Our findings have implications for county-based Cooperative Extension professionals seeking to build all-important strong partnerships with county commissioners.

**Keywords:** [county commissioner perceptions](#), [public image of Extension](#)

### **Mark Blevins**

County Extension  
Director and  
Agriculture Agent  
Brunswick County  
Cooperative Extension  
Bolivia, North Carolina  
[mark\\_blevins@ncsu.edu](mailto:mark_blevins@ncsu.edu)

### **K. S. U. Jayaratne**

Professor and State  
Leader for Extension  
Evaluation  
Department of  
Agricultural and  
Human Sciences  
North Carolina State  
University  
Raleigh, North  
Carolina  
[jay\\_jayaratne@ncsu.edu](mailto:jay_jayaratne@ncsu.edu)

### **Jackie Bruce**

Associate Professor  
and Director of  
Graduate Programs  
Agricultural and  
Extension Education  
Academic Program  
Department of  
Agricultural and  
Human Sciences  
North Carolina State  
University  
Raleigh, North  
Carolina  
[jabruce2@ncsu.edu](mailto:jabruce2@ncsu.edu)

### **Lucy Bradley**

Professor and  
Extension Specialist,  
Urban Horticulture  
Department of  
Horticulture  
North Carolina State  
University  
Raleigh, North  
Carolina  
[lucy\\_bradley@ncsu.edu](mailto:lucy_bradley@ncsu.edu)

### **Mitzi Stumpf- Downing**

Assistant Professor  
and Assistant State  
Program Leader for 4-  
H Youth Development  
North Carolina State  
University  
Raleigh, North  
Carolina  
[mitzi\\_downing@ncsu.edu](mailto:mitzi_downing@ncsu.edu)

## Introduction

The relationship between Cooperative Extension and county commissioners is vital to the success of county-based Extension programming. Cooperative Extension is a partnership of federal, state, and local governments in the United States. County commissioners are important stakeholders in this partnership because they often make the final decisions on funding and policy at the county level (North Carolina Center for County Research, 2014). Each of North Carolina's 100 counties is governed by an elected board of five to nine county commissioners. Understanding the perceptions of county commissioners regarding Cooperative Extension in North Carolina and elsewhere is critical for Extension to maintain and increase its relevance in the 21st century.

Decades ago, White (1965) studied county commissioner perceptions of Extension in the northeastern part of North Carolina. The 85 participants from 18 counties in that region were mostly (53%) rural residents who farmed (47%) or ran a business that directly or indirectly served farmers (42%) (White, 1965). Sixty percent felt that educating residents on farming and homemaking was the most important function for Extension agents at that time (White, 1965). However, North Carolina demographics have changed significantly over the last half century. Some rural counties have become suburban or urban. Currently, 14 of the 100 counties in North Carolina are considered suburban, and six are considered urban (NC Rural Center, 2015). Many counties now considered suburban were rural in the 1960s. Despite these demographic changes, the alignment of priorities between Extension and a county remains an important determinant for the success of a local Extension office (Terry, 2009). This alignment occurs only if there is a close working relationship between county Extension professionals and the county government.

A study conducted with 370 county Extension directors across the country showed that county Extension directors who have strong partnerships with their county governments are most likely to oversee thriving Extension offices (Surls, 2008). The strength of these partnerships is closely associated with having access to county elected officials and building relationships with those officials (Surls, 2008). County Extension officials' ability to work with key leaders is important for county Extension to be effective (Cooper & Graham, 2001), and understanding county commissioners' perceptions of Extension is a critical foundation for building this relationship.

According to Fombrun (1996), organizational reputation is based on perceptions of four major stakeholder groups: customers, investors, employees, and community members. Their perceptions result from the corporate identity an organization presents to the public at large and via interactions with individuals (Fombrun, 1996). These stakeholders base their impressions on four expectations: "reliability for customers, credibility for investors, trustworthiness for employees, and responsibility for communities" (Fombrun, 1996, p. 72).

As Fombrun's (1996) notion relates to Extension, investors are county commissioners, state legislators, and other decision makers. Their perception of Extension is an important determinant of their willingness to support Extension (Place, Vergot, & Dragon, 2005). For instance, reporting on a study conducted with Maryland legislators to determine their perceptions of Extension, Adkins (1980) emphasized that "it is critical to the future of Extension that these decision-makers have a knowledge and understanding of the Cooperative Extension Service as a basis for their decisions" (p. 3). Further, Adkins (1980) found that where a legislator lived mattered more with regard to perceptions of Extension than other demographic characteristics, with

legislators in rural counties where agriculture is the major economic activity valuing agriculture programs of Extension and thus tending to have a positive perception of Extension.

Additionally, other studies have identified the following individual-level demographic variables as having an impact on commissioners' perceptions of Extension: years served, age, level of education, occupation, and involvement in Extension (Campbell, 1968; Cannizzaro, 2007; Cox, 1972; Dowell, 1969; Kelly, 1973; Lindstrom, 2007; Nolan, 2008; Shane, 1981; Wahl, 1989). Moreover, some of these studies showed that county demographic factors such as the urban or rural nature of a county and, as noted above, the significance of agriculture in a county economy also influence commissioner perceptions (Campbell, 1968; Cannizzaro, 2007; Kelly, 1973; Nolan, 2008; Wahl, 1989).

The results of these studies indicate the importance of understanding perceptions of Extension held by county commissioners, who make decisions at the county level on both funding and policy. However, most such studies are from the past, and limited research has been conducted more recently to determine what factors contribute to today's county commissioners' decisions regarding Extension—decisions based, in part, on their perceptions of Extension program performance and impacts. Therefore, determining current-day perceptions is important for understanding county commissioners' image of Extension and building strong Extension partnerships with local governments.

## Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the research reported here was to determine county commissioners' perceptions of the performance of Cooperative Extension. We planned the study to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determine county commissioners' perceptions of the performance of Extension.
2. Determine the demographic backgrounds of county commissioners and their counties.
3. Determine whether county commissioners' perceptions of the performance of Extension vary according to demographic variables.

## Methods

Ours was a descriptive correlational survey research study. We developed a 10-item instrument, with items having 5-point Likert-type scaled response options (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *somewhat disagree*, 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 4 = *somewhat agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*), for determining county commissioners' perceptions of the performance of Extension. The selection of the 10 items in the instrument was based on the related literature.

A panel of seven experts in Extension education established the validity of the instrument. The feedback received from the expert panel was used for clarifying some of the questions. The instrument was pilot tested with a sample of 26 retired county commissioners, county managers, and county Extension directors. According to pilot test data, Cronbach's alpha for the 10-item scale was 0.95.

The study population comprised 583 county commissioners in North Carolina. We obtained the directory of all North Carolina county commissioners through the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. Contact information for the individual commissioners was obtained through web searches and requests

through clerks to the boards of commissioners in counties where websites did not provide email addresses for these elected officials. Only one individual had no access to email, so a telephone-based survey was offered to that commissioner.

We conducted the online survey using Qualtrics and followed the survey procedure outlined by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014) to increase the response rate. First, we sent a postcard invitation to the study population, including a link to the online survey. Three days later, we sent an email to participants; the message included verification from a leader in the state association of county commissioners to help establish trust. The following week, we sent a follow-up email with further information about the importance of each person's response and additional support from leaders in the statewide county commissioners association. For a fourth contact, we called selected commissioners from counties that had no respondents to encourage survey participation online or immediate response by phone. Finally, we sent a follow-up email on the third week following the initial mailing.

After 8 weeks, we had received 163 responses. Via a final attempt through phone calls and emails, we received another 22 responses, for a total of 185 responses from the total population of 583. In our pilot testing of the survey, we evaluated the items for online and telephone administration because we were planning potentially to phone county commissioners who did not have email addresses and, thus, determined that gathering late responses using a phone survey versus the online survey did not introduce measurement error. Low response rates are common in surveys involving elected officials. For example, Shaw (2005) completed a research study in North Carolina with a county commissioner response rate of only 33%. The response rate of 32% in our study is comparable with that of Shaw's 2005 study.

We examined the data set and found missing responses to be randomly distributed across the sample without any pattern. We also conducted exploratory factor analysis and found only one factor loading the 10 items used for recording perceptions. Lindner, Murphy, and Briers (2001) suggested addressing nonresponse error by comparing early and late respondents. We compared the demographic characteristics, including the rural, suburban, and urban nature of their constituencies, of the 22 county commissioners who responded to the survey late with those of the county commissioners who responded to the survey early to address the nonresponse error. The comparison of demographics of early and late respondents revealed that there was no significant difference between the two groups. Therefore, findings of our study can be generalized for the study population.

## Findings

### Demographics

Respondent ages ranged from 30 to 85 years, with a mean of 62.75 years and a standard deviation of 10.5. Years of service in the elected position ranged from 1 to 29, with a mean of 7.65 and a standard deviation of 6.1. The majority (69.6%) of the county commissioners had an associate's degree or higher (Table 1). A vast majority (86%) had had prior involvement in one or more Extension-related activities, as summarized in Table 2. Only 14% did not have any prior involvement with Extension as individuals.

**Table 1.**  
County Commissioners' Levels of Education

<b>Level of education</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than high school degree	0	0
High school diploma (or equivalent, including GED)	10	6.2
Some college but no degree	39	24.2
Associate's degree (2-year)	21	13.0
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	55	34.2
Master's degree	22	13.7
Professional degree (PhD, JD, MD, EdD)	14	8.7

*Note.* No. of respondents = 161.

**Table 2.**  
County Commissioners' Prior Involvement with Extension

<b>Level of prior involvement</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Not involved at all	25	14.0
Involved in one of five identified ways	80	44.9
Involved in two of five identified ways	43	24.2
Involved in three of five identified ways	26	14.6
Involved in four of five identified ways	4	2.2
Involved in all of five identified ways	0	0

*Note.* No. of respondents = 178. Identified ways of being personally involved with Extension were as follows: 1. Attended event/classes; 2. Volunteered at events/programs; 3. Member of local or state advisory council; 4. Have a child who was/is a 4-H member; 5. Other.

Nearly 59% of the county commissioners represented rural counties, and 38% represented suburban/rural counties. Only 3.4% represented urban counties. Ninety-four percent of the commissioners said agriculture is extremely important or very important to their local economies (Table 3).

**Table 3.**

## County Commissioners' Views of Importance of Agriculture to Local Economy

<b>Importance of agriculture</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Extremely important	118	67.0%
Very important	48	27.3%
Moderately important	5	2.8%
Slightly important	4	2.3%
Not at all important	1	0.6%

*Note.* No. of respondents = 176.

## Perceptions of the Performance of Extension

The commissioners' responses to the 10 items addressing the performance of Extension are indicated in Table 4. The four items with which the highest percentages of respondents strongly agreed were as follows: "adds value to our community" (73.0%), "makes positive impacts" (65.2%), "is an effective organization" (64.7%), and "aligns with my county goals/vision" (62.9%). The two items with which the fewest respondents strongly agreed were "shares the amount of information I need to make decisions about programs" (45.8%) and "shares the type of information I need to make decisions about programs" (42.5%).

**Table 4.**  
County Commissioners' Perceptions of the Performance of North Carolina Cooperative Extension

Item	No. responding	Percentage of respondents				
		Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Adds value to our community	174	0.6	1.7	1.7	23.0	73.0
Makes positive impacts	178	0.6	1.1	1.1	32.0	65.2
Is an effective organization	173	0.6	2.3	2.3	30.1	64.7
Aligns with my county goals/vision	178	0.6	0.6	7.3	28.7	62.9
Is an efficient organization	156	1.3	2.6	7.7	35.9	52.6
Shares important information with people who might not access it otherwise	173	2.3	1.7	8.7	35.3	52.0
Is cost effective	174	1.1	2.9	12.1	33.3	50.6
Reaches the people who need services Extension provides	177	1.1	3.4	6.2	39.0	50.3
Shares the amount of information I need to make decisions about programs	155	1.9	3.9	12.3	36.1	45.8
Shares the type of information I need to make decisions about programs	174	2.3	4.6	10.9	39.7	42.5

We aggregated responses to the 10 items on the scale to ascertain county commissioners' overall perception of the performance of Extension. This overall perception could range from 10, a very negative perception, to 50, a very positive perception. The aggregated mean value of county commissioners' perception of the performance of Extension was 44, with a standard deviation of 6.75. This finding implies that the commissioners had a positive overall perception of the performance of North Carolina Cooperative Extension.



## Relationships Between Perception and Demographic Variables and Among Demographic Variables

Results of our correlation analysis of the county commissioners' overall perception of Extension and selected demographic variables are summarized in Table 5. The county commissioners' overall perception of North Carolina Cooperative Extension was positively correlated (0.23) with their perceived importance of agriculture to the county economy. Further, county commissioners' perceived value of agriculture to the county economy was positively correlated (0.15) with increasingly rural constituencies. Additionally, county commissioners' prior involvement with Extension was positively correlated (0.22) with importance of agriculture to the local economy.

**Table 5.**  
Correlations Associated with County Commissioners' Perception of North Carolina Cooperative Extension and Their Demographics

Variables	OP	IA	A	WC	YS	LE	IE
Overall perception of Extension (OP)	—						
Importance of agriculture to the local economy (IA)	.23**	—					
Age (A)	.14	.02	—				
Whether constituents are urban, suburban, or rural (WC)	-.07	.15*	-.12	—			
Years of service (YS)	.12	.05	.31**	.05	—		
Level of education (LE)	.01	-.09	-.05	-.08	-.04	—	
Prior involvement in Extension (IE)	.16	.22**	.04	-.01	.02	.03	—

*Note.* \*\*Correlation is significant at  $p < .01$  (2-tailed). \*Correlation is significant at  $p < .05$  (2-tailed).

## Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

In general, existing studies conducted with county commissioners to explore their perceptions of Extension are somewhat old. This situation emphasizes the need for new studies such as ours to improve understanding of how to work with county commissioners when building the relationship between Extension and county government. Our findings document county commissioners' perceptions of Extension and the demographic variables associated with their perceptions.

Our findings have broad implications for county-based Extension officials related to understanding how to develop a positive image of Extension among local elected officials and strengthen the relationship with county government. In particular, our findings have direct implications for Extension services similar to North Carolina Cooperative Extension. However, it is important to be cautious when interpreting implications of findings of the study for urban counties because only 3.4% of the county commissioners studied represented urban counties. This may be a limitation of the study.

An important finding is that a considerable portion (14%) of the county commissioners had not had prior involvement with Extension. It is possible that county commissioners lacking prior involvement with Extension serve in other states as well. County commissioners who do not have prior involvement with Extension may

not have adequate knowledge about Extension. It is important to overcome this knowledge gap to help county commissioners develop a favorable perception of Extension. A study conducted in Colorado indicated that county commissioners seek help from Extension to understand all the services that are available to their citizens (Colorado State University Extension, 2017). Inviting county commissioners to participate in Extension events taking place in their communities is a practical strategy for keeping them informed about Extension work. Rice and Procter (2012) reported that having a dialogue between county commissioners and Extension is helpful for educating the commissioners about Extension services.

The majority of county commissioners we studied had had previous involvement in Extension and as a result had some understanding of Extension. Local Extension officials in similar circumstances can build on that foundation to strengthen the relationship with county government. For example, a county commissioner whose children are involved in 4-H might be interested in success stories from the local 4-H program. Impact information from all program areas of Extension should be included in communications targeted to county commissioners so that any positive perceptions about one specific program area overflow into the other program areas mentioned in positive communication about the organization. This type of communication will contribute to cognitive attributional processing (Sjovall & Talk, 2004) and development of a positive image of Extension.

Seventy percent of the commissioners in our study had earned a postsecondary degree, highlighting their appreciation for higher education. This situation could be a starting point for conversations about how Extension translates research-based information from the state university for the purpose of educating the people in their communities on ways to improve quality of life.

Over 90% of the county commissioners we studied agreed that Extension adds value to the community, makes positive impacts, is an effective organization, and aligns with their county priorities. Similar to these findings, Lindstrom (2007) reported that 93% of county commissioners in Washington State felt that Extension provided a good return for the county investment. Alignment of local Extension programming with county priorities and building of accountability could improve understanding among county partners that Extension provides important services to the community (Steinbarger, 2005). Establishing a positive impression of Extension among county commissioners is necessary for securing their support for Extension programming in any county in the United States.

By contrast to the aforementioned perceptions of Extension, fewer of the commissioners we surveyed agreed that Extension shares the amount of information and type of information they need to make decisions about programs, indicating the need for further exploration of the commissioners' information needs and the opportunity to improve communication. Establishing regular communication with county commissioners is important for eliminating possible misunderstandings and building strong work relationships with this key stakeholder group.

County commissioners who perceived that agriculture is important to their county economies tended to have a positive perception of Extension, suggesting the importance of communicating the contribution of Extension to local agriculture for gaining county commissioners' full support of Extension. This finding also highlights the commissioners' limited understanding of the significant contribution of other areas of programming, such as 4-H youth development and family and consumer sciences educational programs, in their counties. The most important implication of this finding is identification of the need to communicate broad outcomes and impacts

of all program areas of Extension to help county commissioners develop a realistic view of Extension programming without narrowly perceiving that Extension is meeting only the needs of agriculture producers. This action is important for building a realistic image of Extension irrespective of whether a county is rural or urban because rural county commissioners might tend to view Extension mainly as an agriculture service provider and urban county commissioners might tend to assume that Extension has nothing to offer in their counties.

County commissioners' overall perception of Extension did not vary significantly relative to a commissioner's age, years of service, level of education, prior involvement with Extension, or service to constituents who are rural, suburban, or urban. Similar to this finding, Cannizzaro (2007) found no significant differences in perceived performance of Extension relative to population density (rural/suburban/urban) or gender, primary occupation, or highest level of education of elected officials. Perceptions of Extension seem to remain constant irrespective of elected officials' backgrounds.

In states such as ours, where 97% of the county commissioners we surveyed felt that agriculture is important to their local economies, keeping commissioners informed about Extension's contribution to agriculture in the local economy should occur at every available opportunity. Increasing a commissioner's awareness of the economic importance of agriculture may influence the commissioner's involvement with and overall perception of Extension while making that individual more conscious of issues their rural constituents face and the relevance of Extension work regarding those issues. It is necessary to invite county commissioners to important Extension programs and events to keep them engaged with Extension and develop a positive perception of all program areas of Extension. This strategy is in line with recommendations from McMoran and Gundersen (2018).

Because state demographics are changing quickly due to continuous urbanization, a longitudinal study is needed to determine whether county commissioner perceptions of Extension change with changing demographic trends over a period of time. Such studies can allow Extension to realign its work and communication linkages with this important local key stakeholder group to sustain the Extension–county partnership for the future. As well, our study population did not adequately represent county commissioners in urban counties. Therefore, it is important to conduct similar studies in states where there is an adequate representation of urban county commissioners to overcome this limitation and gain further understanding of this distinct stakeholder group.

## References

- Adkins, R. J. (1980). *A study of the Maryland legislators' perception of the Maryland Cooperative Extension service* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/302997538>
- Campbell, C. E. (1968). *Oklahoma's county commissioners' attitudes toward the use of area specialized agricultural extension agents* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/302414645>
- Cannizzaro, P. C. (2007). *The importance of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service as perceived by members of local governing bodies in Louisiana* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304837036>
- Colorado State University Extension. (2017). *2017 county commissioner satisfaction survey summary report*.

Retrieved from [https://source.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2017\\_CommissionerSurveyResultsCSUExtension.pdf](https://source.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2017_CommissionerSurveyResultsCSUExtension.pdf)

Cooper, A. W., & Graham, D. L. (2001). Competencies needed to be successful county agents and county supervisors. *Journal of Extension*, 39(1), Article 1RIB3. Available at: <https://www.joe.org/joe/2001february/rb3.php>

Cox, B. L. (1972). *Perceptions of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service by selected parish police jury and school board members* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/302681319>

Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys* (4th ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Dowell, G. L. (1969). *A study of county commissioners' cognition and appraisal of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/288136994>

Fombrun, C. J. (1996). *Reputation: Realizing value from the corporate image*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Kelly, E. M. (1973). *A study of the relative importance of selected content and clientele of Cooperative Extension Service programs as reflected by county commissioners from rural and urban counties in Florida* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/302674630>

Lindner, J. R., Murphy, T. H., & Briers, G. (2001). Handling nonresponse in social science research. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 42(4), 43–53. doi:10.5032/jae.2001.04043

Lindstrom, J. H. (2007). *The relationship among Washington State county commissioners' knowledge and perceptions of Washington State University Extension and their willingness to fund WSU Extension* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304842164>

McMoran, D., & Gundersen, C. (2018). Establishing an agricultural summit. *Journal of Extension*, 56(2), Article v56-2iw2. Available at: <https://www.joe.org/joe/2018april/iw2.php>

NC Rural Center. (2015). *North Carolina counties*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncruralcenter.org/about-us/>

Nolan, M. M. (2008). *Ohio general assembly perceptions of the Ohio State University Extension* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304484163>

North Carolina Center for County Research. (2014). *Basics of North Carolina county government*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncacc.org/DocumentCenter/View/1094/White-Paper-Basics-of-North-Carolina-County-Government>

Place, N. T., Vergot, P., III, & Dragon, S. L. (2005). Internationalizing Extension: Benefits and impact among faculty, students and stakeholders. *Proceedings of the 21st Annual Conference of Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education* (pp. 57–68). Retrieved from <https://www.aiaee.org/attachments/article/977/080.pdf>

Rice, T., & Procter, D. (2012). *Kansas Association of Counties/K-State Research and Extension dialogue*.

Retrieved from [https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/boardleadership/about-ksre/seac\\_home/KACKSRE%20Summary.pdf](https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/boardleadership/about-ksre/seac_home/KACKSRE%20Summary.pdf)

Shane, W. H. (1981). *Boards of county commissioner's knowledge and perception of the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension Service* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/303031203>

Shaw, F. D. (2005). *Decision-makers' perception of quality indicators for the total county Extension program* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/305428412>

Sjovall, A. M., & Talk, A. C. (2004). From actions to impressions: Cognitive attribution theory and the formation of corporate reputation. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 7(3), 269–281.

Steinbarger, D. M. (2005). The view from county partners—Extension in southwest Washington. *Journal of Extension*, 43(2), Article 2FEA1. Available at: <https://www.joe.org/joe/2005april/a1.php>

Surls, R. A. (2008). *Land-grant universities and the county–Extension relationship: Challenges, successes and emerging trends* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304674871>

Terry, B. D. (2009). *Fundamental dimensions and essential elements of exemplary county Extension offices: A Delphi study* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304886806>

Wahl, M. E. (1989). *Factors influencing legislators' perceptions of a state-supported educational organization—the Michigan Cooperative Extension Service* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/303817790>

White, E. E. (1965). *A study of county commissioners' perception of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, Northeastern Extension District, North Carolina* (Master's thesis). North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC.

---

*Copyright* © by Extension Journal, Inc. ISSN 1077-5315. Articles appearing in the Journal become the property of the Journal. Single copies of articles may be reproduced in electronic or print form for use in educational or training activities. Inclusion of articles in other publications, electronic sources, or systematic large-scale distribution may be done only with prior electronic or written permission of the [Journal Editorial Office, joe-ed@joe.org](mailto:joe-ed@joe.org).

If you have difficulties viewing or printing this page, please contact [JOE Technical Support](#)